



AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

**Remembering those experiencing injustice,
A time for contemplation.....**

November 2020

“Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners. And those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering.” Hebrews: 13:3

A special time is usually set aside in Bishop Alcock’s Chapel on the first Sunday of each month from 9.00 - 10.15am. Here we hold in mind or pray for the people whose cases are highlighted for the current month.

Though we cannot gather in person due to present circumstances, we invite you to remember the cases here and any others for whom you have a particular concern.

USA: Prisoner on death row

Rodney Reed is a black man who has been on death row since 1998. He was sentenced for the murder of a young white woman, which both he and leading forensic pathologists maintain he did not commit. A 2015 execution date was stayed based on newly discovered evidence. However, Texas courts have repeatedly denied requests for DNA testing of the crime scene evidence and reset his execution for 20 November 2019. On 15 November the Texas Court of Appeals halted the execution, ordered the original court to consider the new evidence and recommended that the Governor grant a 120-day reprieve.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the court to consider the new evidence fairly and without prejudice
- For the United States to abolish the death penalty. Since 1973 more than 160 prisoners sent to death row in the USA have later been exonerated or released from death row on grounds of innocence. Others have been executed despite serious doubts about their guilt.

Amnesty opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception –regardless of who is accused, the nature or circumstances of the crime, guilt or innocence or method of execution.

ALGERIA: Journalist jailed for covering protests

In February 2019 a peaceful movement erupted in Algeria called the Hirak. This movement called for political change and for more freedoms, the rule of law, and an end to corruption. In Algeria, independent press is limited, and as an independent journalist, Khaled Drareni played a crucial role in documenting police violence and arbitrary arrests during the protests. But on 27 March, Khaled was arrested after he was caught filming police officers as they approached protesters. Initially he was sentenced to three years in prison, but on 20 September the appeal court reduced the sentence to two years.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the government to immediately and unconditionally release Khaled
- For Khaled to be allowed access to medical care as he had lost a great deal of weight and appeared very weak at the appeal hearing
- For the government to stop targeting journalists and activists who call for more democracy and respect for the rule of law in Algeria

BENIN: Mother of seven shot by police

In May 2019 there were street protests following controversial legislative elections. Prudence Amoussou hoped to resume her work as a street seller later that day, so her teenage daughter went to see if things had calmed down. As hours went by Prudence went in search of her daughter and was shot in the back when police fired live bullets at protestors. Prudence was left lying in a pool of blood, struggling to draw breath. Later that day she died in hospital after surgery. Her declaration of death document stated that she had died of 'an illness'. On 31 October the Beninese parliament granted amnesty to alleged perpetrators of crimes during the protests – both ordinary people and members of the security forces.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For Prudence's family to be granted a cause of death certificate so they can honour her memory through a funeral and bury her
- For the government to provide all victims of the post-electoral violence with adequate reparation
- For the government to ensure an impartial and independent investigation into cases of unlawful killing and bring the perpetrators to justice in fair trials.

Good news!

Iranian human rights activist Narges Mohammadi has been released from prison after her sentence was reduced. She is a campaigner against the death penalty and was the spokeswoman for the Defenders of Human Rights Centre in Iran. She was arrested in 2015 and sentenced to 16 years in prison for 'forming and managing an illegal group'. She had been in poor health for some time but had not received adequate medical care.

Sources for cases: Amnesty International UK, BBC

'I pray for all of us, oppressor and friend, that together we may succeed in building a better world, through human understanding and love, and that in doing so we may reduce the pain and suffering of all sentient beings.'

Dalai Lama XIV

"To clasp one's hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world."

Please take this sheet away with you and use it in prayer or meditation, and any action you feel and find possible.

Your local Amnesty group can be contacted at www.amnestyelycity.org.uk

ELY AMNESTY NEWS

All of our forthcoming events and regular meetings have been postponed or cancelled until further notice due to the Coronavirus / COVID-19 outbreak.

If you are interested in what we normally do, or would like to find out ways that you can continue to support Amnesty from home, then please feel free to get in touch with us through the above website.